

REMARKS

This case has been carefully reviewed and analyzed in view of the Office Action dated 29 March 2004. Responsive to that Office Action, Claims 1, 3, 7-9, and 11-14 are now amended for further prosecution. It is believed that with such amendment of claims, there is a further clarification of their recitations.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-10 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. It is believed that the amendments to the claims incorporated hereby now obviate the Examiner's formal concerns under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Also in the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Drawings under 37 CFR § 1.83(a). More specifically, the Examiner stated that the limitation of "concave groove" recited in Claim 13 is not shown in the Drawings. It is respectfully noted, however, that such "concave groove" is in fact shown in Figs. 1, 4, and 5, marked with the reference number 56. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected Claims 11-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Zhang, et al. '028 reference. The Examiner additionally rejected Claims 13-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Zhang, et al. '028 reference. In setting forth this rejection, the Examiner

acknowledged that Zhang, et al. fails to disclose a groove that is concave, or a portion having an inclined shape. The Examiner, however, concluded these features to be obvious matters of design choice.

The Examiner further rejected Claims 1 and 3-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bertho, et al. reference in view of the Zhang, et al. '028 reference. In setting forth this rejection, the Examiner acknowledged that Bertho, et al. fails to disclose a lever placed on an ejector-receiving groove. For this feature, the Examiner cited the Zhang, et al., and concluded that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have incorporated the groove of Zhang, et al. into Bertho, et al.'s module. The Examiner further acknowledged that Bertho, et al. and Zhang, et al., even when considered together, fail to disclose a concave groove or an incline-shaped push portion. The Examiner nonetheless concluded that such would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

The Examiner also rejected Claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bertho, et al. and Zhang, et al. '028 references, further in view of the Zhang, et al. '167 reference. In setting forth this rejection, the Examiner cited the Zhang, et al. '167 reference for disclosing a pivot protrusion 105, and concluded again that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate such pivot protrusion into any module taught by the combination of Bertho, et al. and Zhang, et al. '028.

As Applicant's newly-amended independent Claims 1 and 11 each now more clearly recite, Applicant's ejector is "contained in" a "housing" of the given card connector, disposed "in the ejector receiving groove" thereof. The ejector includes a displaceable slider for engaging the card received in the connector. The ejector also includes a user-manipulable push rod and a lever having first and second ends engaging respective portions of the push rod and slider. As Claims 1 and 11 each now more clearly recites, the ejector is formed such that "the lever ... [is] pivotally displaced responsive to" user manipulation of "the push rod to impart a responsive pressing force upon the moving portion of the slider." The slider is "driven thereby to displace along ... [a] slide groove," such that the given "card is driven outward ... by the push portion of the slider to be expelled from the card connector."

The full combination of these and other features now more clearly recited by Applicant's pending Claims is nowhere disclosed by the cited references. The cited Zhang, et al. '028 and '167 references are directed to electrical connectors admittedly equipped with an ejector mechanism. Note, however, that the push-rod in each of those ejector mechanisms serves merely a "releasing" function for the rejecter's actuator. Nowhere do these references teach that a user's pressing of the push-rod itself serves "to impart a responsive pressing force upon the moving portion of ... [a] slider," which then displaces along a slide groove to drive the given card "outward from the card's receiving space ... to be expelled from the

card connector” (as Claims 1 and 11 each now more clearly recites). Zhang, et al.’s push-rod (in each reference) serves merely as a catch and release for the connector’s internal spring-loaded actuator assembly.

The Bertho, et al. reference discloses structural features which clearly depart from the now more clearly recited by Applicant’s pending Claims. Note, for instance, that Bertho, et al. is directed to a particular configuration for providing certain structural benefits like maintaining a “as low a profile for the overall connector apparatus as possible,” (Column 1, Lines 34-35) and minimizing “the overall envelope of the connector apparatus,” (Column 1, Line 44). With such structural factors in mind, Bertho, et al. prescribes ejecting means for an IC pack connector apparatus which includes an actuating lever 18 disposed to operate fully outside an ejecting member 16. The engagement end 64a of the actuating lever 18 engages the top outer edge of the ejecting member 16 to apply a hammer-like force thereupon.

This carefully prescribed structure departs from such features as the ejector being “contained in the housing” of the connector and disposed “in the ejector receiving groove” of the housing, as each of Applicant’s independent Claims 1 and 11 now more clearly recites. Such carefully prescribed structures teaches plainly away from any slider for engaging the given card, wherein “a moving portion extend[s] longitudinally along” a “slide groove … for displacement therein,” as Claims 1 and 11 also now more clearly recite. Indeed, the very object

MR1115-478

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of Bertho, et al. – to “maintain as low a profile” as possible, and to minimize “the overall envelope of the connector apparatus” – plainly precludes the structural modifications that would be necessary to incorporate these and other claimed features in to the Bertho, et al. ejecting means 30.

It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that the cited Zhang, et al. ‘028, Zhang, et al. ‘167, and Bertho, et al. references, even when considered together, fail to disclose the unique combination of elements now more clearly recited by Applicant’s pending Claims for the purposes and objectives disclosed in the subject Patent Application.

It is now believed that the Patent Application has been placed in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 7/7/04

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